

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMCONSULJERUSALEM PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY

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EXDIS FOR AMBASSADORS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: MOPS, PBOR, MILI, IS, US, LE, PLO, SY

SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON CEASEFIRE

REF: TEL AVIV 7803

1. FOR AMBASSADOR PARKER: AS CONFIRMED IN OUR SECURE VOICE
TELECONS, THERE ARE TWO KEY ASPECTS OF THE SOUTH LEBANON
SITUATION WHICH WE MUST DEAL WITH URGENTLY. FIRST AND
FOREMOST IS THE DANGEROUSLY RISING LEVEL OF CEASEFIRE VIOLA-
TIONS AND PROVOCATIONS WHICH THREATEN TO UNDERMINE THE
ISRAELI COMMITMENT NOT TO INTERFERE WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION

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OF THE SHTAURA AGREEMENT. THE LEBANESE NO DOUBT WILL CON-
SIDER THE ISRAELIS' DECISION TO POSTPONE TODAY'S ILMAC
MEETING AS A CLEAR SIGNAL OF ISRAELI CONCERN. WE THEREFORE
APPRECIATE THE FACT THAT YOU ARE TRYING TO GET IN TOUCH WITH
BOUTROS TODAY TO UNDERLINE IN FAIRLY STARK TERMS THE NEED
TO GET SOME CONTROL OVER THE REJECTIONISTS AND OTHERS RE-
SPONSIBLE FOR THE VIOLATIONS. THE LEBANESE MUST BE URGED

TO DO ALL IN THEIR POWER TO GAIN PLO/FATAH AND SYRIAN CO-OPERATION IN THIS OBJECTIVE. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE LEBANESE HAVE ONLY LIMITED POWER TO AFFECT THE SITUATION IN THE SOUTH BUT AMBASSADOR LEWIS MUST BE IN A POSITION TO ASSERT TO THE ISRAELIS THAT THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN DOING EVERYTHING IN ITS POWER TO CALM MILITARY ACTIVITY THERE.

2. THE SECOND ASPECT OF THIS PROBLEM IS THE NEED FOR ISRAELI/LEBANESE EXCHANGES ON THE POLITICALLY SENSITIVE ISSUES OF CONCERN TO THE ISRAELIS, INCLUDING THE GOOD FENCE, THE FATE OF THE CHRISTIAN MILITARY COMMANDERS AND ANY POSSIBLE FUTURE AND MORE EXTENSIVE PALESTINIAN MILITARY WITHDRAWALS FROM SOUTH LEBANON. YOU SHOULD EXPLORE WITH BOUTROS PRACTICAL MEANS OF KEEPING OPEN A DIALOGUE OR AN EXCHANGE WITH THE ISRAELIS ON THESE ISSUES. IF THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE IN THE ILMAC MEETINGS IN WHICH THE LEBANESE ARE REPRESENTED AT THE COLONEL LEVEL, THEN PERHAPS SOME OTHER CHANNEL OR FORM SHOULD BE CONSIDERED. WHILE WE WOULD BE WILLING IN PRINCIPLE TO TRANSMIT TO THE ISRAELIS LEBANESE THINKING ON THESE ISSUES, WE ARE RELUCTANT TO SUGGEST THIS SINCE THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN AT LEAST AN IMPLICIT UNDERSTANDING ON THE PART OF ISRAELIS THAT DISCUSSIONS ON THESE ISSUES WOULD TAKE PLACE DIRECTLY BETWEEN ISRAELIS AND LEBANESE. WE HAVE NO SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS ABOUT HOW YOU MIGHT HANDLE THIS ISSUE WITH BOUTROS, THOUGH WE SENSE THAT THERE IS AT LEAST SOME GIVE IN THE LEBANESE
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POSITION SINCE KHOORY, FOR EXAMPLE, HIMSELF INDICATED A READINESS TO MEET WITH THE ISRAELIS. AGAIN, WE HOPE THAT AMBASSADOR LEWIS CAN BE ARMED WITH CREDIBLE ASSURANCES THAT ISRAELI-LEBANESE EXCHANGES ON THESE OTHER MORE SENSITIVE ISSUES WILL TAKE PLACE UNDER SOME GUISE OR ANOTHER.

3. FOR AMBASSADOR MURPHY: PLEASE GET IN TOUCH WITH APPROPRIATE SYRIAN OFFICIAL AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE TO URGE THE SYRIANS TO DO EVERYTHING THEY CAN WITH PLO/FATAH TO CALM THE SITUATION IN SOUTH LEBANON AND TO GET THE REJECTIONISTS UNDER SOME FORM OF CONTROL. CAST YOUR PRESENTATION IN THE FRAMEWORK OF OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THE SYRIANS HAVE PLAYED A HELPFUL BEHIND-THE-SCENES ROLE IN TRYING TO CALM THE SITUATION THERE AND IM ASSISTING THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES IN MOVING TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SHTAURA AGREEMENT. EXPLAIN, HOWEVER, THAT THE ESCALATION IN MILITARY INCIDENTS HAS TRIGGERED INTENSE ISRAELI CONCERNS. WITH THE ISRAELIS, WE ARE COUNSELING PATIENCE AND RESTRAINT, BUT WE CANNOT ABSOLUTELY GUARANTEE THAT THE ISRAELIS MAY NOT DECIDE TO RETALIATE. SAY THAT WE WOULD APPRECIATE ALSO A SYRIAN ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION IN SOUTH LEBANON, THE PRESENT POSITION BEING TAKEN BY THE RE-

JECTIONISTS, THE CONTINUED PLO/FATAH COMMITMENT TO THE SHTAURA AGREEMENT, ETC.

4. FOR AMBASSADOR LEWIS: PLEASE MAKE CLEAR TO THE ISRAELIS THAT WE WILL BE DOING OUR BEST, AND WITH A SENSE OF URGENCY, TO HELP GET THE SITUATION UNDER CONTROL THROUGH REPRESENTATIONS IN BEIRUT AND DAMASCUS. EXPLAIN THAT WE ARE CONFIDENT THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT IS AS INTERESTED AS

THE ISRAELIS IN ASSURING A STABLE CEASEFIRE. WE INTEND TO KEEP ISRAELIS CURRENTLY INFORMED OF LEBANESE AND SYRIAN EFFORTS.

5. EXPLAIN TO THE ISRAELIS, HOWEVER, WE WERE DISAPPOINTED
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IN ISRAEL'S DECISION TO CANCEL TODAY'S ILMAC MEETING WITH LEBANON. AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE MEETING WOULD HAVE OFFERED AN OPPORTUNITY TO DESCRIBE THE INTENSITY OF ISRAEL'S CONCERNS OVER THE CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS TO THE LEBANESE. THE SOONER THE PALESTINIAN WITHDRAWAL TAKES PLACE AND THE LEBANESE ARMY IS INTRODUCED INTO THE AREA, THE MORE LIKELY IT WILL BE THAT MILITARY ACTIVITY WILL RECEDE. WE THEREFORE HOPE THE ISRAELIS WILL SCHEDULE AN ILMAC MEETING EARLIER THAN NOW PLANNED SO THAT MATTERS CONCERNING THE WITHDRAWAL-DEPLOYMENT CAN BE THRASHED OUT AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE. AS FOR THE MORE SENSITIVE POLITICAL ISSUES, IT APPEARS TO US THAT YOU HAVE SOME FOUNDATION ON WHICH TO BASE YOUR URGINGS TO THE ISRAELIS THAT THEY REMAIN PATIENT. THESE INCLUDE:

-- OUR REGULAR CONDITIONING OF THE LEBANESE IN BEIRUT, NEW YORK, AND WASHINGTON THAT THEY SHOULD TRY TO REACH PRAGMATIC UNDERSTANDINGS. WE ARE CONTINUING THESE EFFORTS.

-- THE APPARENT FACT THAT GENERAL KHOURY AT LEAST INTENDS TO DEAL FAIRLY LENIENTLY WITH THE MILITARY COMMANDERS. "DEPORTATION" MAY BE TOO STRONG A WORD. KHOURY MENTIONED TO US IN WASHINGTON THAT A LENGTHY TRAINING ASSIGNMENT ABROAD FOR HADDAD MIGHT BE ONE ANSWER, AND HE HAS MADE A SIMILAR HINT TO OUR DATT IN BEIRUT. IN ANY EVENT, LEBANON'S MARONITE LEADERS WOULD NEVER ALLOW HADDAD AND COMPANY, REGARDED AS HEROES BY MANY CHRISTIANS, TO BE PUNISHED BY THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT.

-- THE APPARENT FACT THAT KHOURY IS PREPARED TO REINTEGRATE INTO THE ARMY VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE ARMY TROOPS WHO COOPERATED WITH THE CHRISTIAN MILITIAS AND HAD ACCEPTED HADDAD'S DIRECTION. THE POSSIBILITY THAT SOME OF THESE TROOPS MAY
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BE TRANSFERRED, AT LEAST TEMPORARILY, FOR RETRAINING AND INDOCTRINATION IN UNITS NOW BEING FORMED SHOULD NOT BE AN ISSUE OF HIGH CONCERN TO THE ISRAELIS.

-- THE FACT THAT KHOURY AT LEAST HAS BEEN THINKING OF LEAVING GOOD FENCE GATEWAYS OPEN WITH A ROLE FOR THE UN IN THEIR SUPERVISION ON THE LEBANESE SIDE. WHILE KHOURY MAY HAVE EXCEEDED HIS AUTHORITY, IT AT LEAST DEMONSTRATES SOME LEBANESE WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES TO A TOTAL CLOSURE. ALSO, THERE MAY BE SUBSTANTIAL PRESSURE FROM CIVILIAN INHABITANTS IN MARJAYOUN AREA TO RETAIN EMPLOYMENT AND TRADE ARRANGEMENTS WITH THEIR ISRAELI NEIGHBORS. VANCE

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